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ABSTRACT

This conference paper addresses the abundance of information delivery choices available to academic library online searchers. Following a review of changes and choices that have developed during the past decade, the paper suggests 10 ways for the searcher to keep up to date in this fast changing field: (1) read subject-related journals, system newsletters, software/hardware reviews, and the new electronic journals; (2) set up SDIs (selective dissemination of information) to keep up to date on the latest developments; (3) attend meetings and conferences; (4) learn from colleagues; (5) plan training workshops for library staff and end users; (6) attend system and database producer training sessions; (7) consult university computer center personnel as expert advisors; (8) establish library information budgets; (9) organize quick reference filing systems; and (10) establish goals and adhere to them. (Author/THC)

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ONLINE SEARCHING: USING THE RIGHT CONNECTIONS

Paper presented by Constance W. Holt
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Tri-State Library Conference: Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin
Theme: Connections: Improving Library Services Through the Uses of Technology
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Abstract:

The conference paper addresses the information delivery choice overload of academic library online searchers, and suggests ten ways for the searcher to keep up to date in this fast changing field: Read, set up SDI's, attend meetings, learn from colleagues, plan training, attend training sessions, use computer centers, establish information budgets, organize filing systems, and establish and adhere to goals. CWH

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ONLINE SEARCHING: USING THE RIGHT CONNECTIONS

TRI-STATE CONFERENCE, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS. SEPT. 19,1985. CONSTANCE W. HOLT

DATELINE: 1972 THE BEGINNING: LOCKHEED IS CURRENTLY IMPLEMENTING PLANS TO OFFER THE PUBLIC ONLINE RETRIEVAL SERVICES ON THE ERIC DATABASE ON A COMMERCIAL BASIS.

DATELINE: 1985 THE PRESENT: LIBRARY HI TECH NEWS HEADLINE: SEARCHING ONE MILLION RECORDS ON DIGITAL LASER DISCS

DATELINE: IN THE MEANTIME, IN THE MERE 13 YEARS BETWEEN TIME, LIBRARIANS FIRST DIPPED A RELUCTANT TOE INTO THE CHURNING TECHNOLOGICAL WATERS AND THEN PLUNGED IN. WE BECAME, SOME OF US, INFORMATION DELIVERERS. AND THROUGH OUR DELIVERY OF INFORMATION TO OTHERS AND THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF PRODUCERS, VENDORS, HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENTS AND THE MIGHTY MIRACLE OF THE SILICON CHIP, WE HAVE BEEN IMMERSED IN THE CREATION OF AN ENTIRE NEW FIELD OF INFORMATION WHICH NOW THREATENS TO DROWN US IN DATA AND CHOICES. WHILE WE HAVE BEEN LEARNING TO BE INFORMATION DELIVERERS, THE WATER SPIGOT OF INFORMATION WE NEED, TO DELIVER INFORMATION TO OTHERS HAS BEEN TURNED ON FULL BLAST.

II. WHO AMONG US DOES NOT REMEMBER THE FIRST TIME WE LET OUR FINGERS DO THE WALKING ON A TERMINAL KEYBOARD - OR WHETHER OR NOT WE WERE FORCIBLY ORDERED TO SIT AT A KEYBOARD AND DO AN ONLINE SEARCH? OTHER THAN THE PANIC, KNOWING THE MONEY WE WERE SPENDING MAKING THOSE INITIAL LEARNING MISTAKES, AND THE REALIZATION OF THE MIRACLE OF IT, THERE WERE THE CONNECTION CHOICES: DATABASES, SIMPLE AND FEW. THERE WAS ERIC, THERE WAS THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE.

EQUIPMENT, SIMPLE AND SMALL CHOICE - A THERMAL PRINTER TERMINAL AND AN ACOUSTICAL MODEM FOR THAT FRIENDLY AND FAMILIAR TELEPHONE WE HAD PUT TO OUR EAR FOR YEARS. PAPER- ALL WE NEEDED WAS A MANUAL OR GUIDE TO SEARCHING. WE DID IT, HESITANTLY AT FIRST, AND THEN WITH FULL SPEED AHEAD. THEN WE BEGAN TO HOLD WORKSHOPS TO EXPLAIN THE BENEFITS OF DIGGING UP INFORMATION BY COMPUTER. WHEN I WAS PREPARING THIS PRESENTATION, I PULLED OUT AN OLD MANUSCRIPT WRITTEN FIVE YEARS AGO TO INTRODUCE ONLINE SEARCHING TO UNIVERSITY FACULTY. IN DISCUSSING THE BENEFITS OF ONLINE SEARCHING I SAID TO THEM: RESEARCH TAKES TIME: TIME TO FIND THE TOOLS AT HAND, TIME TO LEARN HOW TO USE THE TOOLS; TIME TO LOCATE THE INFORMATION GATHERED. WE HELPED SELL THIS DANDY NEW RESEARCH TECHNIQUE AND NOW OUR PATRONS ONLY HAVE TO LOCATE THE REFERENCES GATHERED AND LEARN FROM THEM. WE DO ALL THE REST -- INCLUDING THE TIME CONSUMING RESEARCH TO KEEP CURRENT IN A FIELD WHICH GREW SO QUICKLY THAT THE CONSCIENTIOUS ONLINE SEARCHER STAGGERS UNDER THE BURDEN OF CONSTANT RETRAINING AND ORIENTATION BEFORE MASTERY CAN BE ACHIEVED WITH WHAT WAS THOUGHT TO BE THE LATEST INNOVATION. AND THE BARELY INITIATED NEWCOMER STANDS BEWILDERED BY CHOICES. LITTLE DID WE KNOW BACK THEN WHAT WE WERE GETTING INTO. SISYPHUS IS NO MYTH TO THE ONLINE SEARCHER.

III. FIRST WE GOT THE HANG OF DIALOG AND BRS. AND THEN, AT THE END OF 1983 (LESS THAN TWO YEARS AGO) CAME BRS AFTER DARK AND THE KNOWLEDGE INDEX, THOSE FRIENDLY END USER DATABASES THAT TURNED OUT TO BE FRIENDLIER THAN THEIR PARENT SYSTEMS BUT PRETTY UNFRIENDLY TO THE UNINITIATED WHO DIDN'T KNOW HIS OR HER ANDS, ORS, AND NOTS. WE STARTED OUT AS SEARCHERS, THEN BECAME INSTRUCTORS, THEN ADDED TRAINING OTHERS TO OUR TASKS AND THAT IS NOT THE END OF IT. AFTER DIALOG CAME DIALOG 2 AND WE WERE BACK TRAINING OURSELVES.

IV. ALL OF THE BUILDING BLOCKS SINCE 1972 HAVE DELIVERED US TO THE PRESENT AND TO THIS CONFERENCE ENTITLED "CONNECTIONS: IMPROVING LIBRARY SERVICES THROUGH

THE USES OF TECHNOLOGY." OUR QUESTIONS ARE: WHAT CONNECTIONS? WHAT TECHNOLOGY? WHAT FROM ALL THE CHOICES AVAILABLE TODAY CAN WE USE TODAY, CAN WE AFFORD TODAY, DO WE HAVE TIME TO LEARN TODAY? WE ARE IN THE MIDST OF AN INFORMATION DELIVERY CHOICE OVERLOAD. WE ARE BESIEGED WITH NEW TECHNOLOGIES COMING AT US, OFFERED TO US SO RAPIDLY THAT WE PANT OUR WAY TO THE ONLINE TERMINAL IN DESPERATE ATTEMPTS TO CHOOSE, TO KEEP UP, TO AVOID PROFESSIONAL OBSOLESCENCE AND DO A QUALITY JOB FOR OUR PATRONS. DOES IT HELP US AT ALL TO KNOW WE ARE NOT ALONE, THAT THE GENERAL PUBLIC'S OCCUPATIONAL HALF LIFE OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS USED TO BE 14 OR 15 YEARS AND THAT NOW IN LESS THAN FIVE YEARS, HALF OF WHAT WE LEARN IS OBSOLETE? FRANKLY, IT FEELS LIKE AN ONLINE SEARCHER'S JOB AND THE CURRENTLY HELD KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL TO MAINTAIN IT HAS A SHELF LIFE OF ABOUT HALF AN HOUR. THAT'S THE WAY IT IS HERE OUT ON THE EDGE; AT LEAST, I AM AWARE OF NO EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME WHEN I REALLY FELT RIGHT UP ON TOP OF WHAT I KNEW I NEEDED TO KNOW.

FOR EXAMPLE, IN EARLY APRIL THIS YEAR, I WAS INVITED TO INTRODUCE THE DATABASE ACCESS SOFTWARE IN-SEARCH TO WISCONSIN ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS AT THEIR ANNUAL CONFERENCE. MY PRESENTATION WAS READY, HANDOUTS, TRANSPARENCIES, BIBLIOGRAPHIES WERE PREPARED. ONE WEEK PRIOR TO THE CONFERENCE, I FOUND TIME TO READ THE MARCH ONLINE MAGAZINE. JUMPING OUT OF ITS PRINTED PAGE WAS THIS GRAND ANNOUNCEMENT: IN-SEARCH HAS BEEN SUPERCEDED BY A POWERFUL NEW PROGRAM, PRO-SEARCH, WHICH NOT ONLY SEARCHES DIALOG II, BUT BRS BESIDES. IN-SEARCH AT $399 WAS BARELY EXPLAINED IN THE LITERATURE OR IN USE BY SEARCHERS BEFORE THE EXPANDED VERSION AT $495 WAS ANNOUNCED AS AVAILABLE. RAPID CHANGE, RAPID PROGRESS, SUPPOSEDLY FOR OUR BENEFIT - LISTEN TO A FEW OF THE NAMES: PRO-SEARCH, SEARCH-HELPER, UNIVERSAL ONLINE SEARCHER, EASY-NET, THEY ALL SOUND BENEFICIAL; COMBINE THEM WITH SUCH OTHER NAMES AS IRMA FASTLINK, AND BRS BREAKTHROUGH AND THESE SEEMINGLY OVERNIGHT DEVELOPMENTS INCREASE THE ONLINE SEARCHER'S BUDGET FOR RUNNING SHOES AND SOMETIMES LEADS TO NIGHTLY TEETH

GNASHING. YEP, WE NEED RUNNING SHOES TO KEEP UP WITH ALL OUR CHOICES, LET ALONE TO KNOW HOW TO USE WHAT IT IS WE CHOOSE.

WE HAVE EQUIPMENT CHOICES: TERMINALS. THOSE OF US WHO STARTED ON THE OLD PRINT MACHINES AND HUNG IN THERE THROUGH THE DAWN OF THE MICROCOMPUTER AND ALL OF ITS PROMISES AND REALITIES ARE NOT ONLY EXPECTED TO BE EXPERTS ON DATABASES NOW, BUT ON THE EQUIPMENT AND SOFTWARE TO ACCESS THEM AS WELL. ANY PROPOSAL FOR UPGRADING SEARCH EQUIPMENT HAS TO INCLUDE CONSIDERATIONS OF BUDGET, SERVICING, COMPATIBILITY, PRESENT SOFTWARE, FUTURE USE - AND THE CHOICE OF TERMINALS IS ENDLESS: APPLE, APPLE II, APPLE IIE, MACINTOSH, EVERYTHING BUT THE APPLE CORE. ZENITH, COMMODORE, COMPAC, HEWLETT PACKARD, DEC, IBM-PC, AT&T AND ON AND ON.

AND CRT'S. WILL YOU HAVE ORANGE OR GREEN PRINT ON YOUR SCREEN OR DO YOU PREFER MONOCHROME TO COLOR? MODEMS, WHAT KIND WILL YOU PROPOSE? IT USED TO BE WE HAD THE CHOICE OF 300 BAUD; THEN CAME 1200 BAUD AND THOSE WHO HAD IT MARVELED AT THE SPEED - FOR ABOUT HALF AN HOUR UNTIL WE READ AN INCOMING ARTICLE ABOUT 2400 BAUD AND AGAIN, WE READ THAT 9600 BAUD WILL BE STANDARD BY 1987, LITTLE MORE THAN A YEAR AWAY. THE IRMA FASTLINK I MENTIONED A FEW MOMENTS AGO IS A 10,000 BAUD MODEM NOW AVAILABLE WHICH TRANSMITS FILES 8 TIMES FASTER THAN A 1200 BAUD MODEM, CUTTING CONNECT TIME BY AS MUCH AS 75% - AND THIS TIME COMMERCIAL ONLINE VENDORS ARE HAVING TO PLAY CATCH UP AS THEY CAN'T SUPPORT THE FASTER TRANSFER RATE YET. THINK OF THE RUNNING SHOES WE WILL SOON NEED JUST TO KEEP THE PAPER FEEDING INTO THE PRINTER BEFORE THE FULL BOX RUNS OUT. AND PRINTERS, THERE ARE DAISY WHEEL, DOT-MATRIX, COMBINATIONS, INK JET, LASER. WOW OR WHEW.

COMMUNICATIONS: WHAT CONNECTION IS BEST? TYMNET, TELENET, UNINET, DIALNET. AND WE HAVEN'T EVEN GOTTEN TO THE COMMUNICATIONS SOFTWARE, LET ALONE DATABASE ACCESS SOFTWARE, THOSE PACKAGES NAMED SCIMATE UNIVERSAL ONLINE SEARCHER, SEARCH HELPER, MICRODISCLOSURE, TARGETED FOR SPECIFIC PRODUCER'S

DATABASES. AND THEN, WHAT ABOUT LETTING THE CLIENT DO THE SEARCH: WHAT WILL WE OFFER? KNOWLEDGE INDEX, BRS BREAKTHROUGH, AFTERDARK, COMPUSERVE, THE SOURCE, DELPHI, OR GATEWAY SOFTWARE, WHICH ALLOWS A USER TO DIAL UP A GATEWAY WHICH SWITCHES TO A RELEVANT ONLINE HOST SYSTEM, EASY-NET IS AN EXAMPLE. WHAT ABOUT DATABASE SUBSET SUBSCRIPTIONS SUCH AS ERIC MICROSEARCH, OR MICROACCESS BITS FROM BIOSIS TO WHICH A LIBRARY CAN SUBSCRIBE MUCH LIKE WE NOW SUBSCRIBE TO PRINTED MATERIAL? HOW AND WHEN WILL WE TEACH CLIENTS TO DO THEIR OWN SEARCHING? NOT IF, BUT HOW, WHEN? WHAT ON? DECISION SOFTWARE IS OUT THERE FOR BUSINESS MANAGERS NOW TO, AS POPULAR COMPUTING HEADLINES, HELP UNRAVEL RISKS AND REWARDS THROUGH PROGRAMS WHICH SUGGEST OPTIONS BASED UPON WEIGHTED FACTORS.WE SURE COULD USE SOME LIBRARY DECISION PROGRAMS.

AND NOW, WHERE ARE WE GOING TO GET 45 MINUTES TO AN HOUR OF TIME TO DO - ARE YOU READY FOR THIS? PRE-SEARCH COUNSELING. WE DON'T MERELY INTERVIEW ANYMORE, WHAT WE ARE SUPPOSED TO BE DOING IS THIS PRE-SEARCH COUNSELING FOR EACH END USER. SUCH A TERM WITH ITS TIME IMPLICATIONS, REMINDS ME OF BILL MILLER'S WARNINGS ABOUT WHAT'S WRONG WITH REFERENCE; WE ARE TRYING TO DO MORE AND MORE WITH LESS AND LESS. THE PRE-SEARCH COUNSELING IDEA IS ALSO ENOUGH TO SEND ME DASHING FOR A COUNSELING COUCH OF MY OWN WITH MY FRIENDLY LOCAL ANALYST. HOW ABOUT YOU? ARE YOUR COUNSELING SKILLS UP TO DATE? THIS IS NOT MY TERM, IT COMES FROM JANKE OF THE UNIV. OF OTTAWA IN LAST MONTH'S ONLINE MAGAZINE. THERE IS NO DOUBT THE ROLE OF ONLINE SEARCHERS IS CHANGING FROM INTERMEDIARY TO INSTRUCTOR, BUT COUNSELOR FOR HEAVEN SAKE, HOW PRETENTIOUS ARE WE GOING TO GET? AND WHERE ARE WE GOING TO GET THAT 45 MINUTES TO AN HOUR PER END USER?

AND THAT IS NOT ALL, HERE COMES SILVER PLATTER: BUY THE COMPLETE ERIC DATABASE, OR PSYCINFO, PAIS, LISA, EMBASE ON COMPACT OPTICAL DISCS, AND GET UPDATES. HAVE THE WHOLE SHOOTING MATCH RIGHT THERE TO SEARCH ANYTIME WITHOUT CONNECT CHARGES, COMMUNICATIONS, SYSTEM DOWN TIME. COSTLY? YOU BET IT'S

COSTLY. BUT THERE IT IS AND COMING TO OUR LIBRARIES. WILL YOU DROP PAPER SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DO FREE SEARCHING FOR PATRONS?

AND DATABASES, TALK ABOUT PROLIFERATION, NOT ONLY DOES DIALOG OFFER US DIALINDEX FOR SELECTION CHOICES, BUT THIS SUMMER A NEW FILE NAMED DATABASE OF DATABASES WENT UP TO HELP US FIND OUT WHAT IS OUT THERE IN APPROXIMATELY 2500 PUBLICLY AVAILABLE DATABASES ACCESSIBLE THRU EITHER ONLINE SEARCHING, BATCH PROCESS, DIRECT LEASE, LICENSE,PURCHASE ON TAPE, DISKETTE OR SOON PERHAPS THE HEAD OF A PIN?

V. KEEPING UP TO DATE

WHAT TO DO? AT TIMES WE CAN WISHFULLY THINK OF THE MARVELOUS POSSIBILITIES IN THE TITLE OF AN OLD BROADWAY SHOW: STOP THE WORLD, I WANT TO GET OFF. AHHH. WOULD THAT WE COULD CONVINCE OUR SENATORS AND CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES TO PASS A LAW CREATING A SIX MONTH MORATORIUM BY ALL DATABASE PRODUCERS, AND VENDORS, COMPUTER GURUS, EQUIPMENT MAKERS, JOURNAL EDITORS AND WRITERS. SO THAT ALL OF THEM WOULD BE REQUIRED TO JUST STOP DOING ANYTHING. NO NEWS, NO NEW PRODUCTS, NO LATEST AND GREATEST FOR JUST SIX MONTHS. THEN WE COULD SPEND SIX MONTHS CATCHING UP WITH ALL OF IT AND ON MARCH 19 WE WOULD ALL BE UP TO DATE. ALAS, HALF AN HOUR LATER WE WOULD BE BEHIND AGAIN BUT AT LEAST WE WOULDN'T BE LIGHT YEARS BEHIND WHAT WE WANT AND NEED TO BE ON TOP OF.

DREAM WHEN YOU ARE FEELING PRESSURED. THIS IDEA HAS ABOUT AS MUCH CHANCE OF CONSIDERATION AS DOES A CONGRESSIONAL RECANTING OF WHAT THEY HAVE DONE TO PLAYBOY IN BRAILLE. SO WE NEED TO MAKE OTHER ARRANGEMENTS:

THERE ARE THE OBVIOUS WAYS TO KEEP UP TO DATE AND I WILL JUST BRIEFLY MENTION THEM.

1. WE ARE LIBRARIANS - SO WE CAN READ - READ EVERYTHING WE CAN GET OUR HANDS ON. NOT ONLY THE OBVIOUS JOURNALS, ONLINE, DATABASE, POPULAR COMPUTING, BUT THE SYSTEM NEWSLETTERS LIKE CHRONOLOG, OTHER NEWSLETTERS, SOFTWARE/HARDWARE REVIEWS, AND THE NEW ELECTRONIC JOURNALS LIKE INFORMATION ACCESS OFFERS ON ONLINE SEARCH SYSTEMS, VIDEOTEXT,AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES THAT AFFECT LIBRARIES.

2. WE CAN DO ONLINE SEARCHING FOR OURSELVES - TO DELIVER OURSELVES THE INFORMATION WE NEED. THE MICROCOMPUTER INDEX, THE COMPUTER DATABASES. WE CAN EVEN SET UP OUR OWN SDI'S SO WE CAN GET THE LATEST INFORMATION. WHY SHOULD WE BE DELIVERING ALL OF THIS TO OTHERS AND NEGLECTING OUR OWN NEEDS?

3. WE CAN KEEP GOING TO MEETINGS, PARTICULARLY ONES LIKE THIS THAT FOCUS ON SHARING IDEAS WITH OTHERS BEYOND OUR NATURAL NEIGBORHOODS. IF WE CAN'T GET AWAY OR THE BUDGET IS TIGHT, WE CAN ORDER AND READ THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL ONLINE MEETINGS AND THE ANNUAL ONLINE CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS. BUY THEM FOR OUR LIBRARIES OR LIBERALLY USE OUR OWN INTERLIBRARY LOAN.

4. WE CAN KEEP IN TOUCH WITH OUR ONLINE COLLEAGUES THROUGHOUT THE REGION OR STATE. CALL THEM UP AND FIND OUT WHAT THEY ARE DOING. IF YOU HAVE AN IDEA OR A PROBLEM, BOUNCE IT OFF THEM, THEY MAY HAVE BEEN THERE BEFORE AND CAN SAVE YOU TIME. ASK IF THEY HAVE LEARNED SOMETHING HOT AND NEW THAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT. FIND OUT WHAT THEY ARE DOING IN THEIR OWN TRAINING AND RETRAINING PROGRAMS THAT MIGHT BE AN IDEA FOR YOU, AND SHARE YOUR IDEA OF THE MONTH WITH THEM. SHARE HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE PROPOSALS; DON'T ALWAYS BE INVENTING YOUR OWN FRUSTRATIONS. JOIN USER'S GROUPS OR AN ELECTRONIC BULLETIN BOARD OF ONLINE USERS, OR START ONE IF YOU CAN'T FIND ANY. WANT TO KNOW HOW TO START ONE? DO AN ONLINE SEARCH ON STARTING OR COMMENCING OR BEGINNING OR ESTABLISHING BULLETIN PARENS BOARD TRUNCATED.

5. WE CAN PLAN OUR TRAINING WELL - OUR WORKSHOPS FOR STAFF AND END-USERS NEED TO BE PLANNED WITH OUR OWN LEARNING IN MIND. PLAN THEM SO YOU TOO CAN LEARN NEW THINGS AT THE SAME TIME YOU ARE TEACHING OTHERS:

IF YOU TEACH A GROUP TO USE THE KNOWLEDGE INDEX ONE SEMESTER, THEN TEACH BRS BREAKTHROUGH THE NEXT SEMESTER.

AS YOU TRAIN OTHER LIBRARIANS TO SEARCH - AND THIS HAS BEEN A CONSTANT FUNCTION FOR ME FOR SIX YEARS, HURRY THEM FROM THEIR SCRATCH POSITION TO POSITIONS WHERE THEY CAN TEACH YOU SOMETHING. ASSIGN EACH PARTICIPANT A

DATABASE TO EXPLORE, AND EXPLAIN IN DEPTH, INCLUDING THE POSSIBLE USES FOR YOUR PARTICULAR PATRONS. AT THE RATE NEW DATABASES ARE POURING OUT, WE WILL NEVER RUN OUT OF NEW ONES TO EXPLORE AND EXPLAIN.

6. ATTEND SYSTEM AND DATABASE PRODUCER TRAINING SESSIONS. KEEP TRACK OF THE FREE ONES OFFERED. OFFER YOUR HOME LIBRARY AS A SITE, YOU CAN USUALLY GET A FEW OF YOUR SEARCHERS IN FREE THAT WAY.

THERE ARE LESS OBVIOUS WAYS WE CAN FOLLOW TO KEEP OBSOLESCENCE AT BAY.

7. USE YOUR UNIVERSITY COMPUTER CENTERS. SOMEHOW BEING THE IN-HOUSE EXPERTS IN ONLINE SEARCHING, WE HAVE ALSO BECOME BY DEFAULT THE NON SELF-ASSIGNED IN-HOUSE EXPERTS ON EQUIPMENT, TERMINALS, MODEMS, PRINTERS, AND SOFTWARE, AND NOT ONLY ONLINE SOFTWARE. I'M NOT SURE HOW THIS HAPPENED, BUT IT HAS. ONE HIGH TECH FUNCTION MASTERED MAKES DIRECTOR'S THINK WE MUST HAVE ALL HIGH-TECH FUNCTIONS MASTERED. YOUR COMPUTER CENTER PEOPLE CAN HELP. AND IN WISCONSIN, THE MONEY IS REALLY BEING POURED INTO ACADEMIC COMPUTING - LABS, SOFTWARE TRAINING FOR STUDENTS AND FACULTY, AND EQUIPMENT. IF YOU NEED EQUIPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS, EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE AND SUPPORT, IF YOU NEED TO COMPARE SOFTWARE OR TO GET SOFTWARE RECOMMENDATIONS, THESE FOLKS CAN BE YOUR EXPERT ADVISERS. NOT ONLY THAT KIND OF INFORMATION, BUT EVEN NOT SO SMALL LIBRARIES OF COMPUTER JOURNALS ARE DEVELOPING AT CAMPUS COMPUTER CENTERS. THEY HAVE JOURNALS WE IN THE LIBRARY SHOULD HAVE SEVERAL YEARS OF BACK ISSUES OF, BUT WE CAN'T AFFORD TO BUY THEM. WE HAVE THE NOW NAUSEATING AND FAMILIAR DROP A PERIODICAL TO ADD A PERIODICAL BUDGET CONSTRAINT. AND GOD FORBID THAT A UNIVERSITY LIBRARY DROP THE GEORGIAN JOURNAL OF DENTAL FLOSS IN SERBO-CROATIAN FOR OF ALL THINGS, PERSONAL COMPUTING IN ENGLISH. SO MAKE FRIENDS WITH YOUR COMPUTER CENTER AND ITS KNOWLEDGABLE PERSONNEL. THEY CAN SAVE YOU TIME, FRUSTRATION AND EFFORT. AND YOU NEED THE TIME AND THE HELP, FOR NOT EVEN THOSE DANDY SOFTWARE PACKAGES, AVAILABLE TO US WHICH ARE TO SAVE US TIME FOR MORE PRODUCTIVE ENDEAVORS COME WITHOUT GRIEF OFF THE SHELF. AS ANY SERIOUS ONLINE

PERSON KNOWS, WHEN YOUR NEW SOFTWARE PACKAGE ARRIVES YOU HAVE A LOT OF WORK TO DO BEFORE IT WILL DO ALL THE GREAT THINGS IT PROMISES. ALL THE DISKS HAVE TO BE COPIED OR BACKED UP IN CASE YOU GUM UP THE WORKS, TIME MUST BE SPENT SETTING UP THE DISKS BY TRANSFERRING YOUR OPERATING SYSTEM SOFTWARE TO THEM, SETTING UP YOUR MODEM SWITCHES, CONFIGURING THE PROGRAM TO YOUR MACHINE, YOUR PHONE NUMBERS, BAUD RATE, PASSWORDS. IF THIS SEEMS TO BE BELABORING AN OBVIOUS POINT TO SOME, JUST LET ME SAY TO THE UNKNOWING IN OUR MIDST, WHAT THE SOFTWARE SALESPERSON DOESN'T SAY -- SOFTWARE WON'T DO ANYTHING UNTIL YOU SPEND A LOT OF TIME SETTING IT UP TO DO WHAT YOU WANT. IT IS NOT LIKE BUYING A NEW SHIRT OFF THE RACK. I TRY THE SHIRT ON, BUY IT, PUT IT ON AND GO. COMPARING A SOFTWARE PURCHASE TO THIS WORKS OUT LIKE THIS: I READ ABOUT IT, BUY IT, TAKE IT HOME, HEM THE CUFFS TO THE LENGTH OF MY ARM, HEM THE SHIRT TAIL TO THE LENGTH OF MY TORSO, SEW ON THE BUTTONS, DUPLICATE THE WHOLE THING ON MY SEWING MACHINE IN CASE I RIP IT ON THE FIRST WEARING, WASH, DRY, IRON, AND THEN I AM READY TO GO. KNOWING HOW TO SEW IS COMPARABLE TO BEING ABLE TO WADE THROUGH THE MANUALS AND UNDERSTAND ENOUGH NOT TO SEW YOUR SHIRT SLEEVES TOGETHER, OR TO OUR POINT,FORGET SOME VITAL CONFIGURATION PIECE, OR CHICKEN OUT WHEN THE MANUAL SAYS PRY OFF THE FRONT OF YOUR MODEM AND SET THE SWITCHES. USE YOUR COMPUTER CENTER. CHECK OUT THEIR RECOMMENDATIONS ON SITE. IF THEY HAVE RECOMMENDED A MACHINE OR SOFTWARE AND KNOW ALREADY HOW TO USE IT, THEY CAN BE YOUR BLESSED GODPARENTS WHEN YOU HAVE TO GET IT BOOTED AND WORKING.

8. BUDGETS - IF YOU DON'T ALREADY HAVE ONE, START SETTING THE STAGE FOR AN INFORMATION BUDGET IN THE LIBRARY BUDGET. THERE HAS ALWAYS BEEN A BOOK BUDGET, AND A PERIODICALS BUDGET, FILM BUDGET; WHY OH WHY CAN'T WE HAVE AN INFORMATION BUDGET. WHAT IS THE POINT OF BUYING EXPENSIVE DIRECTORIES OUT OF THE REFERENCE BOOK BUDGET AND HAVE THEM GATHER DUST EXCEPT FOR FOUR TIMES A YEAR WHEN THE INFORMATION IN THEM IS NEEDED? INSTEAD, WITH AN INFORMATION BUDGET, WE COULD GET THE DATA ONLINE IN SECONDS AND GIVE OUR PATRON THE

PRINT FOUR TIMES A YEAR AND SAVE ALL SORTS OF MONEY, TECHNICAL SERVICES EFFORTS AND SHELF SPACE. HOW, YOU ASK WILL THIS HELP US KEEP UP TO DATE? WON'T IT JUST CREATE MORE WORK FOR US, THE ONLINE SEARCHERS? YES AND NO. WHILE IT WILL GIVE US MORE SEARCHING TIME, IT WILL REQUIRE THAT ANY PROFESSIONAL WHO ALREADY DOES OR ASPIRES TO GIVE REFERENCE SERVICE WILL HAVE TO, HAVE TO, GET WITH IT INTO THE ONLINE AGE OR MOVE OVER. EVERY REFERENCE LIBRARIAN SHOULD BE A COMPETENT ONLINE SEARCHER RIGHT NOW. YET, WE ALL KNOW LIBRARIES STAFFED WITH LIBRARIANS WHO ARE STILL SCARED AND HIDING IN THE BOOK STACKS BEHIND THEIR SPLENDID KNOWLEDGE OF A REFERENCE BOOK COLLECTION, MORE THAN EAGER TO KEEP PASSING THE BUCK TO US TO KEEP ON TOP OF THE NEW AGE, WHILE THEY WITHER IN THE OLD ONE. AN INFORMATION BUDGET PUTS IT SQUARELY AS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY, NOT JUST OURS.

9. ORGANIZE -- ORGANIZE YOUR FILING SYSTEM TO KEEP THE DELUGE IN ORDER. HOW MANY OF US TAKE THE TIME TO PUT OUR ONLINE AND COMPUTER INFORMATION INTO USEABLE AND QUICK REFERENCE CATEGORIES? EQUIPMENT, CATALOGS; SOFTWARE, CATALOGS; REVIEWS, SOFTWARE; REVIEWS, HARDWARE; EQUIPMENT, TERMINALS; EQUIPMENT, MODEMS; TRAINING, NOVICES; TRAINING, FACULTY; TRAINING, IDEAS; AND SO FORTH. I EVEN HAVE A FILE FOR COMPUTING ILLUSTRATIONS SO WHEN I NEED TO MAKE A PITCH TO THE FACULTY, I DON'T USE THE SAME JOKES I USED THE LAST TIME. ORGANIZATION IS THE ONLY WAY I KNOW OF TO BE ABLE TO FIND WHAT I WANT WHEN I NEED IT. HERE'S ONE OF THOSE ILLUSTRATIONS: THERE ONCE WAS AN ENGLISH PROFESSOR WHO HAD A LOT OF TROUBLE REMEMBERING WHERE HE HAD PUT HIS SPARE CASH. HE SOLVED HIS PROBLEM BY HIDING IT IN HIS ON-THE-SHELF COPY OF <u>DANTE'S INFERNO</u>. THEN WHEN HE SAID TO HIMSELF, "WHERE IN HELL DID I PUT MY CASH," HE KNEW RIGHT WHERE TO LOOK! MY EQUIVALENT TO <u>DANTE'S INFERNO</u> IS AN ORGANIZED, QUICK REFERENCE FILING SYSTEM. WHEN THE UNIVERSITY CHANCELLOR DROPS BY MY OFFICE NOW AND ASKS, WHAT KIND OF NEW COMPUTER WOULD YOU LIKE FOR YOUR OFFICE, I AM READY IN AN INSTANT WITH MODEL NUMBER, COST, AND ORDERING MATERIAL. JUST

IN CASE THERE REALLY MAY BE THAT KIND OF A GENEROUS CHANCELLOR OUT THERE, YOU CAN BE READY!

THEN WHEN YOU HAVE YOUR SYSTEM ALL SET UP, PLAN SOME TIME INTO YOUR SCHEDULE TO KEEP IT UP TO DATE. THROW OUT THE OLD AND BRING IN THE NEW.

10. AND MOST IMPORTANT, LET US SET UP INDIVIDUAL KEEPING UP GOALS FOR OURSELVES. OUR PROFESSIONAL TIME WILL EVAPORATE IN SERVICE UNLESS WE SET GOALS AND STICK TO THEM: PUT THESE IN YOUR GOAL STATEMENTS AND DO THEM: SET ASIDE AT LEAST 45 MINUTES EVERY DAY TO READ, OR DO AN UPDATE SEARCH, OR PLAN WORKSHOP OR CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE: ORGANIZE THE PILES OF MATERIALS, GET IN TOUCH WITH COLLEAGUES, PLAN TRAINING SO WE CAN LEARN SOMETHING, USE OUR UNIVERSITY COMPUTER CENTER, PUSH FOR INFORMATION BUDGETS.

WE HAVE TO DO ALL OF THIS - FOR WE ARE THE INFORMATION DELIVERERS AND IF WE DO NOT DELIVER INFORMATION TO OURSELVES, WE WILL NOT HAVE INFORMATION WHEN WE NEED IT, EITHER FOR OURSELVES OR FOR OTHERS WHO ALL TOO OFTEN DEPEND UPON US.

IN THIS FRANTIC, EVER-CHANGING FIELD IN WHICH WE WORK AND LIVE, WE CAN SET GOALS FOR OURSELVES FOR STAYING CURRENT IN ORDER TO FIND AND USE THE RIGHT CONNECTIONS. WE CAN KEEP OUR ANTENNA OUT FOR WHAT IS NEW AND WHAT IS COMING DIGITALLY, OPTICALLY, BY LASER, BY SATELLITE OR BY WHATEVER WAY SOME GENIUS IS NOW DREAMING UP. WE NEED TO KEEP OUR RUNNING SHOES ON OR NEAR OUR DESKS AND REMEMBER THAT AN ONLINE SEARCHER'S WORK ALAS WILL NEVER BE QUITE UP TO DATE.

FINALLY, WE WILL NEED TO MAINTAIN A CONCERN ABOUT WHERE WE ARE GOING IN THE HIGH SPEED LANE AS ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS, OR AS SOME WOULD PUT IT AS INFORMATION SPECIALISTS WITH THEIR PRE-SEARCHING COUNSELING. INFORMATION PER SE DOESN'T AMOUNT TO A HILL OF BEANS AND, IN FACT, TOO MUCH OF IT CAN RESULT IN COLLECTIVE CHAOS UNLESS IT IS PUT TO USE BY SOMEONE FOR SOME USEFUL PURPOSES - FOR EXAMPLE, TO ADVANCE A FIELD OF KNOWLEDGE FOR THE NEXT INQUISITIVE MIND. AS IN LIBRARY INSTRUCTION, WHERE WE TEACH OTHERS HOW TO USE THE TOOLS OF THE

LIBRARY EFFECTIVELY, WE DO ONLINE SEARCHING TO FIND INFORMATION FAST, SO THAT THE TIME SAVED FOR THE STUDENT WE HOPE, OR I HOPE, CAN THEN BE SPENT BY THE STUDENT LEARNING, AND GROWING IN DEPTH AND KNOWLEDGE. THE END RESULT OF ALL WE DO REMAINS, EDUCATION, NOT INFORMATION. WE MUST STAY ON GUARD AGAINST GETTING SO BOUND UP WITH OUR HIGH TECH KNOW HOW AND JARGON, AND YES, PRETENTIOUSNESS, THAT WE FORGET THE WHOLE POINT OF IT ALL - THAT WE ARE IN ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS WHOSE MISSIONS ARE TO EDUCATE, FROM THE LATIN EDUCARE - TO TEACH. USELESS REAMS OF INFORMATION ARE LIKE THOSE SOFTWARE PACKAGES THAT WON'T DO A THING UNTIL THE HUMAN MIND DOES SOMETHING WITH THEM. OUR HIGHEST RESPONSIBILITY IS STILL TO HELP THE SEARCHING MIND FIND WHAT THAT MIND NEEDS TO FIND AND KNOW IN ORDER TO BECOME EDUCATED.

THANK YOU.

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